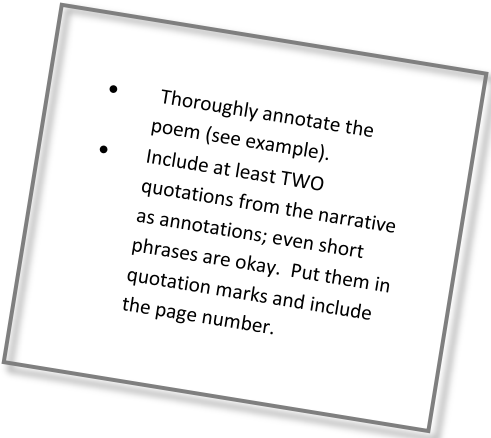


NAME(S): _____

- 
- Thoroughly annotate the poem (see example).
 - Include at least TWO quotations from the narrative as annotations; even short phrases are okay. Put them in quotation marks and include the page number.

Frederick Douglass

When it is finally ours, this freedom, this liberty, this beautiful
and terrible thing, needful to man as air,
usable as earth; when it belongs at last to all,
when it is truly instinct, brain matter, diastole, systole,
reflex action; when it is finally won; when it is more
than the gaudy mumbo jumbo of politicians:
this man, this Douglass, this former slave, this Negro
beaten to his knees, exiled, visioning a world
where none is lonely, none hunted, alien,
this man, superb in love and logic, this man
shall be remembered. Oh, not with statues' rhetoric,
not with legends and poems and wreaths of bronze alone,
but with the lives grown out of his life, the lives
fleshing his dream of the beautiful, needful thing.

Robert Hayden



Robert Hayden

Born Asa Bundy Sheffey in 1913, Robert Hayden was raised in the poor neighborhood in Detroit called Paradise Valley. He had an emotionally tumultuous childhood and was shuttled between the home of his parents and that of a foster family, who lived next door. Because of impaired vision, he was unable to participate in sports, but was able to spend his time reading. In 1932, he graduated from high school and, with the help of a scholarship, attended Detroit City College (later Wayne State University).

Hayden published his first book of poems, *Heart-Shape in the Dust*, in 1940, at the age of 27. He enrolled in a graduate English Literature program at the University of Michigan where he studied with W. H. Auden. Auden became an influential critical guide in the development of Hayden's writing. Hayden admired the work of Edna St. Vincent Millay, Elinor Wylie, Carl Sandburg, and Hart Crane, as well as the poets of the Harlem Renaissance, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Jean Toomer. He had an interest in African-American history and explored his concerns about race in his writing.

Hayden's poetry gained international recognition in the 1960s and he was awarded the grand prize for poetry at the First World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, Senegal, in 1966 for his book *Ballad of Remembrance*.

Explaining the trajectory of Hayden's career, the poet William Meredith wrote:

"Hayden declared himself, at considerable cost in popularity, an American poet rather than a black poet, when for a time there was posited an irreconcilable difference between the two roles. There is scarcely a line of his which is not identifiable as an experience of black America, but he would not relinquish the title of American writer for any narrower identity."

In 1975, Hayden received the Academy of American Poets Fellowship, and in 1976, he became the first black American to be appointed as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress (later called the Poet Laureate). He died in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1980.

How to Annotate a Poem

We annotate texts and poems in order to understand them. An annotation requires many readings of the poem. You must make time to seriously consider each word and its place within the poem as a whole. What is the author saying through this particular speaker/persona? What is the natural progression of the poem? What is its purpose? What is the tone and style of the poem? I will be looking for serious consideration of the following elements:

- Structure of the poem which explains its progression along with the major turning points
- Language that denotes regionalism, education of speaker, rhetorical purpose, etc. Is it conversational, colloquial or does the speaker fall back on formal language?
- Tone: Is the poem celebratory, depressed, confused? Does it shift or change?
- Speaker/Persona: What does the poem reveal about the speaker?
- Imagery: What images does the poem use to create meaning or set the mood?
- Symbolism: What images become symbolic?
- Any other characteristics that are specific to your poem--Every poem is different.

As posted on the University of West Georgia website. Sample annotated poem is from the same source.

Tone: Celebratory
Admiration

Form: Freeform

Digging = extended metaphor of digging and roots.
Heaney digs into his roots, his heritage

Language: technical

Colloquial
Conversational
monosyllables

Digging

Pen fat
with what?

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; as snug as a gun.

Memory #1

his
window -
ownership
threshold to
his heritage

Under my window a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

In rhythm =
In touch with
In agreement
with

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

Admiration
Colloquial
language

Transition

By God, the old man could handle a spade,
Just like his old man.

Memory #2

My grandfather could cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods
Over his shoulder, digging down and down
For the good turf. Digging.

Turning Point

The cold smell of potato mold, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Closure - Acceptance

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it.

Seamus Heaney

2 Separate memories:

Father digging potatoes

Grandfather digging turf - peat bogs

The pen is mightier than the sword.

manual labor
digging with
the mind?
Broken down
resembles
Sonnet

home
power
violence?
protection
A natural extension?

Speaker - male
patriarchal traditions
reverent attitude

rasping connotes a
living thing

remembering / to look down on has negative con.
but the poem is positive +
celebratory

connections with the past, former
generations, traditions

in control, precise
skill, pride, dignity
- bragging rights

survival
nourishment
warmth
potatoes
Symbol: peat
living roots
digging
squat pen
Why squat?
crouching
ownership

worked hard - work ethics
Strength - technique

- negative images
traditions / livelihoods destroyed
no longer available

an awakening
of what? Follow in what way?

Follows tradition of fathers
using the tools available
to him.

Reminders of home
+ hearth
rests, snug,
nestled

Onomatopoeia
rasping
squelch
slap

